The Platforms Compared on Peace, Racism and Civil Liberty, Pages 2 and 3

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Nobody Like Ike Since Joe Passed Away

We found ourselves happy during that climactic session at San Francisco that the proceedings were not being telecast to Moscow. The startled Soviet viewer might have imagined that the U.S. had taken over the cult of personality. That parade of "little people" seconding the nomination of Dwight D. Eisenhower would have recalled the mass meetings at which steel workers and collective farmers bounded for a moment out of obscurity to hail the boundless virtues of one who had now best be nameless. There was a Mrs. Schneider from Texas telling why "we mothers" loved Ike; a coach from Notre Dame who said Ike always made "the right play at the right time"; a little business man from Louisiana who put his hand over his heart and said he "whole-heartedly" accepted every jot and tittle of Ike's platform; a worker who said of Ike "It makes you proud just to look at him"; a nice Jewish lady from Boston who haled him as "the best President we ever had" and quoted her beloved Rabbi on something we did not catch, probably Ike's astounding grasp of the finer points of the *Mishnah*. Not since Joe passed away has any people had such a paragon for leader.

It would all have seemed too familiar to a viewer in Moscow, right down to the virtues of "democratic centralism" in which the opposition is allowed to cut its own moral throat in public before being sent to the sub-Arctic gold mines. There was Comrade Stassen grateful for the favor of being allowed to second the nomination of Comrade Nixon against whom he had long been plotting, probably at the instigation of a foreign power, since no evidence of domestic support had been uncovered. There was Comrade Knight joyfully dancing the *kupak* for Nixon at the head of the California delegation, probably in the hope that he would only get a ten year sentence. There was Joe Martin's indignant roar, "who does he want to nominate?", when a foolish comrade from Nebraska tried to disrupt democratic unanimity by nominating somebody else. The only other subversive note, injected before anyone was quite aware of what he was saying, came in the invocation offered by the Episcopal Bishop. His prayer for Eisenhower was a sly one. "Grant him," he intoned, "an added measure of insight and understanding." This shows the danger of allowing political freedom to the clergy.

This Diogenes Succeeded

Our favorite character among those sedately tumultuous Republicans was uncovered by a Diogenes for CBS. In the wings he found a bevy of lightly spangled nymphs from a nearby night club waiting with Nixon banners. (At the last moment their enthusiasm seems to have been cruelly repressed because they never appeared on the floor.) When he asked one of them, "Are you Republican?", she tee-hee'd uncertainly and said "Yes", obviously a girl with quite a memory span. But next to these lovely politicoes were two Chinese children waiting with Nixon banners and when the CBS man asked one of them, "Who are you demonstrating for?", he answered in honest bewilderment, "I don't know." The delegates on the floor were better informed. They knew the names. But of the reality behind "Eisenhower" and "Nixon", the real capacities, the real intentions, the real men, the *"dinger an sich"?*

There must have been no more than a dozen men on that floor who really knew the labors of propping up an old soldier into a statesmen, of interrupting golf and bridge to get papers signed, of painfully briefing him in the mysteries of the tariff, and straightening him out on the farm problem. There may have been even fewer who knew the real story which reached its climax when Eisenhower and Stassen called off that anti Nixon campaign like two small boys shamefacedly caught by teacher. As Eisenhower told the reporters "Well, you will remember for quite a little while, I didn't know that Mr. Nixon was going to run again, he took quite a considerable time after he and I first talked it over, to make up his mind. . . ." Suppose Ike had been left at the last moment without a running mate? No doubt this anxiety explains his announced willingness to interview any applicants for the job in San Francisco. The help problem in the White House is terrific.

Memorable Moments

This Republican convention, though it did move somewhat slowly, and often seemed a concert interspersed with political speeches, had its memorable moments. There was that boast from Dewey, just a hundred years after Lincoln, the glad tidings of a new emancipation, "Guatemala is now free." There was Herter, plodding with gentlemanly desperation through those encomiums of Nixon. If ever anybody had a psychosomatic sore throat it was the Governor of Massachusetts nominating another man for Vice President when he would rather have stayed in bed with a nice case of pneumonia. There was Martin shouting to the only rugged individualist who had turned up in years at a Republican convention, "You take Joe Smith and get out of here." And there was Martin at press conference earlier in the day dismissing questions about Ike's health as "rather morbid." There was Ike telling the press that Stassen would second the nomination of Nixon and asking the reporters, "Is it today?" and adding (possibly after a whispered assist from Hagerty), "Yes—this afternoon." And Ike being asked whether he thought it was "possible to nominate a stronger candidate than Mr. Nixon" and answering, "Well, I wouldn't know."

The strangest spectacle of all at this convention was the appearance on the plaform of a darkly handsome man who looked like a young Italian tenor, but turned up to speak rather

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On Foreign Policy the GOP Platform Is More Hopeful, Less Belligerent

Truman was unable to dictate the candidates but his spirit dominates the party platform, especially on foreign policy. This is extraordinarily demagogic and irresponsible. "Candidate Eisenhower's 1952 pledges to 'liberate' the captive peoples," it says, "have been disavowed and dishonored." At another point the Democrats seem to be complaining that the Republicans did not really "unleash Chiang Kai-shek" as promised. The Administration is accused of "standing silent when the peoples rise in East Germany and Poland." The Democrats are if anything more rigid than the Republicans in opposing the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. Knowland, Bridges and the Republican rightists would be happier with the Democratic platform.

The most striking and the crucial difference between the two platforms is in their interpretation of events in the post-Stalin Soviet Union. Both have that weird irrationality that marks American foreign policy, but at least the Republicans are more hopeful and less belligerent than the Democrats. All the Democrats have to offer is summed up in their reference to "the new style political and economic offensive of the Soviets, which represents potentially an even graver challenge than Stalin's use of force." This view that the Soviet Union is more dangerous because less intransigeant is the view of the arms lobby, the FBI, the Adenauer government, and the anti-Communist lunatic fringe—that is, of all those whose interests are linked with the maintenance of tension, fear and suspicion. It is the theory of Eastland and of Walter, not of George and Stevenson.

The Republican platform is silly as history; it credits the changes in Soviet policy, domestic and foreign, not to the death of Stalin and the sharp turn made by his successors, but to Eisenhower's magic smile at the summit. "That summit conference," it says, "set new forces into motion. . . . Then followed a repudiation of Stalin, the growth of doctrinal disputes within the Communist party, and a discrediting of party authority and its evil power. Forces of liberalism within the Soviet bloc challenged the brutal and atheistic doctrines of Soviet Communism. . . ." Even Stalin's historians were not more sycophantic than Eisenhower's in their version of how things happened. But such light-headed flattery and campaign handbook bedtime stories are a small price to pay for the practical consequences which flow from this interpretation.

Where the Republicans in 1952 all but committed themselves to "liberation" via a third world war, this time they are talking of "positive evidence that forces of freedom and liberation will inevitably prevail." They are "confident that our peaceful policies, resolutely pursued, will finally restore freedom and national independence to oppressed peoples and nations." While the Democrats urge that the way to peace is to "forego bluster and bluff" they do not seem to realize that the bluster and bluff of Dulles and Nixon find more embodiment in the Democratic platform than in the Republican. The former looks toward continued cold war, the latter toward co-existence—though of course the drafters would never have dared use so suspect a word. It is now the Republicans who say "technical and economic assistance . . . provide the best way to create the political and social stability essential to lasting peace." It is the Republican platform which speaks of the importance of cultural and informational exchanges "between the free peoples and the captive peoples." The Republican stand on foreign policy is clearly superior to the Democratic. One reflects Eisenhower, the other Truman.

The Democrats Want "Peace Through Strength," An Atomic Arms Race

The Democratic planks on national defense reflect the same premises as the planks on foreign policy. The platform demands "return to the Democratic policy of peace through strength." The Air Force has been "stifled", the Army "starved." The Democrats want "national defense outlays based upon our national needs, not permitting false economy to jeopardize our very survival." In practice this means letting the Pentagon pretty much write its own ticket. The Democrats are for disarmament because "time and distance can never again protect any nation of the world" but until there is "forceable international control of weapons, we must maintain armed strength to deter war." How is war to be deterred? By maintaining armed forces "so clearly superior in modern weapons to those of any possible enemy that our armed strength will make an attack upon the free world unthinkable and thus be a major force for world peace." This in practice means an arms race and increased world tension. It assumes naively that every other nation will be as easily convinced as we are that all this piling up of weapons is only with the best of intentions. We are to enforce a Pax Americana on the world. History shows such efforts breed the wars they claim to prevent.

The Democrats want more and bigger atom bombs. Their atomic energy plank calls for an increase in the production of fissionable material to use in a stockpile for peaceful purposes "and for an ever present reserve" of nuclear weapons; there is good reason to believe that we already have more fissionable materials than we could use for peaceful purposes in a generation. The Democrats want to make "the maximum contribution" to defense by accumulating "a balanced and flexible stockpile of nuclear weapons, containing a sufficient number and variety to support our armed services in any contingency." This means to widen instead of limiting atomic war. As for testing, the Democratic platform wants "a comprehensive survey of radiation hazards from bomb tests and reactor operations to determine what additional measures are required to protect existing and future generations from these invisible dangers." This implies that testing can safely go on and that all we need are "additional measures" to protect "existing and future generations." It would be interesting to know just who played the major role in writing these provisions. Certainly it was not AEC Commissioner Murray, the one Democrat left on the Atomic Energy Commission.

The Republican platform, on the other hand, paints a false rosy picture of the progress being made in developing the atom for peaceful uses, particularly in the claim that the AEC is encouraging "a vigorous rural electrification program by cooperatives"—a new high in GOP mythology. But at least it stresses peaceful development and touches on the danger of an atomic "arms race with the prospect of eventual catastrophe" for the whole world. On the atom the GOP is "a shade less worse" than the Democratic platform. Like so much else in it, this platform is hardly in keeping with the candidates.

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The "Party of Jefferson" Showed Remarkably Little Interest in the Bill of Rights

An historian who had only the 1956 Democratic and Republican platforms to go by would never guess that this was a period in American history during which basic freedoms were seriously eroded. Civil liberty, as distinct from the racial problem of civil rights, is mentioned in neither platform. Neither speaks of problems created by use of the Fifth amendment, employment of faceless informers, the discharge of teachers suspected of "subversion", the spreading blacklist in the arts nor the need to curb the excesses of such Congressional investigating committees as House Un-American or Senate Internal Security. And there is no discussion of the right to travel.

The Democratic platform does mention the Bill of Rights at one point but only in connection with the easing of entry quotas for immigrants. "Proper safeguards against subversive elements should be provided," the Democratic platform says piously, but then balances this off with, "Our procedures must reflect the principles of our Bill of Rights." The Democratic platform calls for "progressive immigration policies" but is silent on those provisions of the McCarran-Walter law which allow deportation and denaturalization for present or past membership in radical organizations.

The Democratic platform does not make an issue of the Republican "numbers game." It condemns the Eisenhower administration for violating the rights of government employes "by a heartless and unjustified confusing of 'security' and 'loyalty' for the sole purpose of political gain" and it vaguely proposes "A fair and nonpolitical loyalty program, by law, which will protect the nation against subversion and the employe against unjust and un-American treatment." But it does not get specific about the right to confront an accuser or to know precisely the charges. It does not mention the notorious Chasanow or Ladejinsky cases, the "revolt" of former Senator Cain, nor the speed with which he was dropped by Eisenhower despite all that talk about Wild Bill Hickock and the right not to be stabbed in the back.

Cheerful Note

"The truth is that both the Democratic and Republican parties are socialistic. . . . Both parties are so far gone in Marxism that even the word 'moderation' . . . took on a dirty meaning in Chicago. . . . The so-called Democratic party must continue to shove to the leftward and the Republicans will follow . . . and the people, if they could express themselves, undoubtedly would want it so. . . ."

—Westbrook Pegler, N. Y. Journal-American, Aug. 20.

The Democrats did not mention the extended hearings held or the abuses uncovered by a Senate Post Office and Civil Service subcommittee which investigated the loyalty program nor take credit for establishing under Senator Hennings of Missouri the first Senate subcommittee to look into the abuse of constitutional rights. These omissions eloquently describe the present state of "the party of Jefferson."

The "party of Lincoln" on the other hand says not one word about correcting loyalty-security abuses. It reaffirms the principle of discharging all those whose employment by the Federal government is not "clearly consistent with national security", a rule under which all doubts are resolved against the employe. In keeping with this attitude is a plank which praises the FBI "as well as all other government intelligence agencies" and pledges the GOP never to relax these efforts to insure "that we are protected at all times against subversive activities." No such plank appears in the Democratic platform. Either the Democrats remembered the role played by J. Edgar Hoover in backstopping Brownell's "20 years of treason" attack on Harry D. White, Truman and the Democratic party. Or maybe the FBI was too choosy to ask Democratic support.

How The Party Platforms Compare on The Supreme Court and Civil Rights

On civil rights, both parties went back to fundamentals. The Republicans "unequivocally recognized" that the Constitution is "the supreme law of the land." The Democrats with equal forthrightness said the Federal government "must exercise the powers vested in it by the Constitution." On the Supreme Court both parties expressed themselves less radically. The Democratic platform "recognizes" the Supreme Court "as one of the three constitutional and coordinate branches of the Federal government." The Republican platform "accepts" the Supreme Court's decision that racial discrimination in the public schools must be "progressively eliminated." The Republicans also "concur" that this should be accomplished "with all deliberate speed." The Democratic platform, by contrast, merely notices that "recent decisions . . . relating to segregation" in the schools "have brought consequences of vast importance," an observation on which Mississippi and Harlem can agree.

On the other hand, while careful neither to oppose nor endorse the Supreme Court's school decision, the Democratic platform says "We condemn the efforts of the Republican Party to make it appear that this tribunal is a part of the Republican Party." This cryptic sentence serves notice that above the Mason-Dixon line the Democrats do not intend to let the Republicans take all the credit for Chief Justice Warren. This accords with traditional Democratic opposition to monopoly.

The Republicans, for their part, outflanked the Democrats by including a sentence in their platform which sympathetically echoes the South's criticism of the Supreme Court. It refers to "the complex and acutely emotional problems" which have been created by the school decision "in certain sections of our country where racial patterns have been developed in accordance with prior and long-standing decisions of the same tribunal." This is worded tenderly enough to imply that segregation developed in the South as a result of earlier Supreme Court decisions it loyally obeyed only to have them rudely overturned by the Court itself.

On the question of whether the Supreme Court decision should be enforced or just left to simmer, the two platforms agree again. Both are opposed to the use of force. The only other noteworthy passage in the civil rights planks is a puzzling sentence in the Republican platform. "This administration," it says, "has impartially enforced Federal civil rights statutes, and we pledge that it will continue to do so." Impartially means with no partiality to either side. To enforce the right to vote impartially would seem to mean that the Administration is claiming it did just as much to protect Negroes kept from the polls by whites as it did to protect whites kept from the polls by Negroes. This we believe to be statistically accurate.

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All Depends on Ike's Health — And Nixon's Change of Stance

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than sing. The absence of jowls, the high intellectual forehead, the frizzly hair-do and the graceful manner made him seem altogether alien among the GOP's solid citizenry, taking time off from real estate and embalming for politics.

No Place for An Egghead

Only a day before James Reston in the *New York Times* had reported, perhaps tongue in cheek, that Eisenhower would now be able to articulate his thoughts better because Emmet John Hughes of *Time-Life-Fortune*—the drafter of the "I shall go to Korea speech" in 1952—had rejoined him temporarily as a ghost writer. Here was Hughes being introduced to make a speech on his own as an "independent" for Eisenhower, and taking himself quite seriously, the young idealist given his chance to tell off those politicians at last. Though obviously in no danger of losing his job for addressing a Republican convention, Hughes was determined to prove his independence. He leaned hard and tactlessly on Negro rights, made a posthumous attack on McCarthy, and drew a deadly blank when he said there was a danger that loyalty was being confused with conformity. It wasn't so much what he said as how; this evident foreigner seemed somehow sincere. The convention was first puzzled, then bored. The scattered applause said clearly that it couldn't care less. Hughes, laboring hard against the palpable indifference, mopped his brow and hurried out as if in search of a stiff drink and a friendly Democrat. The experiment in letting a ghost talk had failed. This was no place for an egghead, even one on the payroll.

Campaigning on Korea

Of the 1952 slogan about corruption, Korea and communism, the first and third have been muted. There is a truce on corruption, since Dixon-Yates may easily cancel out mink and deep freezes. Communism was noteworthy by its almost complete absence. Joe Martin was alone and old-fashioned in speaking of the "indelible stain of corruption and communism" and even he explained to the press afterward that he did not mean the Democratic party. Knowland and Nixon have given the party a clean bill of health. "There is only one party of treason in our country," Knowland said, "and that is the Communist party." Nixon said of those people in Chicago, "I'm sure they are all loyal Americans." The tide of reaction is receding and the Democratic party is legal again. What the Republicans are running on this year is Korea—Korea and prosperity. Ike is the man who ended the war in Korea without starting a new one, the man who proved we could have prosperity without war. This was the theme song of the convention, woven into almost every utterance. And unless Ike turns ill before November, it may prove potent enough —and true enough—to win.

The Double Miracle at Chicago

The Democrats, by a double miracle, have come up with two superior and enlightened men. It would be a pleasure to have Stevenson and Kefauver replace the fumbling crew of Boy Scouts who run the country in Eisenhower's name. Both are men of peace and firm friends of civil liberty. Stevenson has the makings of a great President, and Kefauver is a Jack the Giant Killer who won against the opposition of the city machines, the big money interests in the party and the Southerners who will not forgive him for breaking ranks on segregation. To watch him win the nomination despite them all, down to Mississippi's last desperate gesture of swallowing an old bogey and voting for a Roman Catholic to block him, was to see a Horatio Alger story come to life. I stood and cheered. But the party behind these men *is*, like its platform, more belligerent than the Republican. Ike has a common touch Stevenson has yet to develop. The latter's acceptance speech was a bad anti-climax; he fears to be his own witty self and yet cannot bring himself to plunge into the healthy banalities. The GOP still has the peace issue, and the Democrats will make fools of themselves if they try to picture the country as somehow in calamity. This is no time for phoney Armageddons; Stevenson's problem is a difficult one. His chance to win depends on the President's health—and Nixon. And Nixon is smart enough to become a reformed character for the occasion.

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